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# Southern California – Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership

Pilot Project Report and Executive  
Summary

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**Southern California Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership  
Pilot Project Executive Summary (January – June 2014)**

**PROJECT SUMMARY** - The Southern California Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership (Partnership) pilot project was established to help address school environmental health issues within the Southern California area, with a specific focus on schools and childcare centers located within high priority areas. This partnership is made up of agencies, school districts, individual schools, and the community.

The Partnership met on a monthly basis for a period of six months and provided an opportunity to foster ongoing collaboration between stakeholders, provide guidance and technical assistance, and coordinate community outreach on important school environmental health issues in the Southern California area. Twelve school districts participated in the Partnership, representing 1,500 schools, approximately 1,000,000 children, and 46,000 teachers. We had representation from 16 different agencies and five non-profit organizations.

**TOPICS COVERED** - Topics covered during partnership meetings included comprehensive environmental health program development for schools such as EPA's Model School Environmental Health Program, more specific environmental health hazards such as pesticides, PCB's, and vapor intrusion, and topics such as indoor air and outdoor air pollution

**SUCCESS** - The pilot project was tremendously successful, meeting almost all established success criteria. Feedback from an on-line survey demonstrated that eighty-eight 88% of those surveyed had an outstanding to very-good overall experience with the partnership.

**RECOMMENDATIONS and NEXT STEPS –**

***Continue Partnership with Cal-EPA – Expand the Partnership Statewide*** - Leveraging off the established Partnership gives the State of California a head start in creating a state-wide program. A state-wide environmental health program for schools would be characterized by key state agencies (e.g., departments of health, education, energy, and environment) working together along with stakeholders to develop and implement comprehensive policies, best practices, and standards to help schools and school districts address environmental health issues in school facilities. Leadership from a state program can provide schools and school districts with the consistent guidance, resources, tools, and information they need to create healthy school environments for children and staff that promote high student achievement.

***Continue Southern California Partnership – narrow focus on site-specific issues*** - Southern California remains a hotbed of issues due to the proximity of schools to sources of pollution from neighboring facilities and highways. Working with LAUSD, the LA Department of Public Health, DTSC, EPA and the community, continued efforts will be made to leverage agency resources to address issues in the Southern California area.

# Southern California Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership

## Pilot Project Summary

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The Southern California Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership (Partnership) pilot project was established to help address school environmental health issues within the Southern California area, with a specific focus on schools and childcare centers located within high priority areas. This partnership is made up of agencies, school districts, individual schools, and the community.

The Partnership met on a monthly basis for a period of six months and provided an opportunity to foster ongoing collaboration between stakeholders, provide guidance and technical assistance, and coordinate community outreach on important school environmental health issues in the Southern California area. Twelve school districts participated in the Partnership, representing 1,500 schools, approximately 1,000,000 children, and 46,000 teachers.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TOPICS ADDRESSED

The Partnership addressed several different environmental health topics – covering a comprehensive spectrum of issues. This includes comprehensive environmental health program development for schools such as EPA’s Model School Environmental Health Program, more specific environmental health hazards such as pesticides, PCB’s, and vapor intrusion, and pertinent topics such as indoor air and outdoor air pollution. The table summary of agenda topics and presentations are below:

MONTH	TOPIC	SPEAKER	PRESENTATION
JAN	Kickoff	Jeff Scott, EPA	Introduction
		Barbara Cook, DTSC	Introduction
		Jorine Campopiano, EPA	Intro to Framework
		Tom Cota, DTSC	School Clean-Up Program
FEB 25	Overview – School Environmental Health	Maria Gillette, DTSC	Envirostor Introduction
		Jorine Campopiano, EPA	Model School Environmental Health Program
		LAUSD	Intro to LAUSD Env. Health Program
		Dan Gallagher, DTSC	Vapor Intrusion Guidance
MAR 25	Env. Health Hazards	Laurie Brajovich, DPR	Healthy Schools Act & SIPM
		Steve Armaan, EPA, RCRA	PCB’s in Schools - A Regional Perspective
		Kent Thomas, EPA	PCB’s in Schools
		Paula Rasmussen, LA Regional Board	Stormwater in Schools – Construction General Permit
APRIL 22	IAQ/Asthma	Shelly Rosenblum, EPA	Tools for Schools
		Joe Williams, Pomona Unified School District	Pomona Unified – Case Study
		Andrea Polidori, SCAQMD	SCAQMD Air Filtration Studies
		Tom Cota/ Noemi	U.S EPA Brownfields – Grants (10-15 minutes)
MAY 27	Near Roadway Exposures	Dr. Rania	El Cerrito Language School, Parent Action Group

JUNE 24		Andrea Polidori	SCAQMD Near Roadway Work
		Michelle Shultz-Wood	CARB Anti-Idling
		Jorine Campopiano	EPA School Flag Program
	School Siting	Michael O'Neill, CDE	School Siting – California
		Pat Schanen, LAUSD	School Siting
		Jorine Campopiano	US EPA School Siting Guidelines
		John Faust, OEHHA	Cal Enviroscreen

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Twelve school districts participated in the Southern California Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Partnership. This represents approximately 1,500 schools, one million children, and 46,000 teachers.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	Number of Teachers
Los Angeles Unified School District	1087	670,000	31,315
Montebello Unified School District	29	32,739	1,328
Fontana Unified School District	45	41,004	1,685
San Bernardino Unified School District	78	53,847	2,598
Culver City Unified School District	9	6,801	289
Long Beach Unified School District	92	86,283	3917
Santa Monica/Malibu Unified	17	11,723	547
Compton Unified School District	40	26,221	1,400
Pomona Unified School District	45	29,044	1,265
Paramount Unified School District	22	15,836	704
Bonita Unified School District	14	9,927	408
Las Virgenes Unified School District	15	11,644	476
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,493</b>	<b>995,069</b>	<b>45932</b>

## AGENCY PARTICIPATION

- U.S EPA
- U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- California Department of Toxics and Substances Control
- California Department of Education

- California Department of Public Health
- Cal EPA
- California Department of Pesticide Regulation
- California Air Resources Board
- California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- South Coast Air Quality Management District
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
- Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office
- City of Los Angeles
- Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit – UC Irvine

### Non Profit Organizations

- California Safe Schools
- U.S Green Building Council – Los Angeles Chapter
- Kids IAQ
- Malibu Unites (pending 501c3)
- Advocates for Clean Air – El Marino

### EXAMPLES OF PROJECT SUCCESSES

- 1) Implementation of school flag program at Fontana Unified School District.
- 2) Technical assistance to Montebello Unified on EPA's Lead RRP rule
- 3) Posting of EPA presentations on PCB's to nonprofit site working on PCB issues in California
- 4) Request for EPA School Siting presentation to use case examples in college classrooms at UC Riverside
- 5) Formation of Asthma Triggers committee at LAUSD. Invitation for EPA participation
- 6) Referral/Tip of facility complaint - LA Deputy District Attorney brought in materials regarding Carlton/Forge in Paramount.
- 7) Atlas Metals – state investigation underway
- 8) Los Angeles County is forming a “strike-team” to target high risk facilities near schools.

### OUTCOMES AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS EVALUATION

**OUTCOME:** Develop better communication between federal, state, and local agencies, schools, and community members.

***Proposed Measurement*** – number and diversity of participants in partnership

The Partnership meetings were diverse with a variety of stakeholders representing the community, government agencies, and schools. Approximately 20-30 people were in attendance at each meeting. Survey results indicated satisfaction with the group that was brought together and resulting communication improvements.

SUCCESS CRITERIA MET – YES

**OUTCOME:** Discuss broad categories of environmental health issues that are potentially affecting students and staff at local schools

***Proposed Measurement*** – track via spreadsheet number of environmental health issues reviewed and partnership actions taken

The Partnership meetings tackled several different environmental health issues that were diverse and represented pertinent issues facing school districts. Twenty-four presentations were given over the six month period.

SUCCESS CRITERIA MET - YES

**OUTCOME:** Increased identification of potential facilities that may present a risk to local schools

***Proposed Measurement*** – number of facilities reviewed by the Partnership, Number of new cases (e.g., enforcement or voluntary clean-ups)

The Partnership did not discuss any new site specific issues in an open forum. However on-going individual site cases at schools were brought up and discussed privately during meeting times. This included: Atlas Metals & Carlton Forge. The LA District Attorney's office delivered information to EPA about Carlton Forge at a Partnership meeting.

SUCCESS CRITERIA MET – IN PART

**OUTCOME:** Improved Outreach and Information Exchange

***Proposed Measurement*** - Number of training and educational materials provided; Number of opportunities for meetings and training provided

The Partnership provided a number of informational presentations and associated educational materials were provided at each partnership meeting. The presentations and materials were uploaded onto the webinar page for remote users. The Partnership hosted six meetings and 24 presentations were given at each meeting.

SUCCESS CRITERIA MET - YES

## SURVEY RESULTS

An on-line survey was sent to project participants to provide feedback on the pilot project. We had responses from federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies, and non-profit organizations. The survey indicated that the subject topics had high value – with highest rankings given to environmental health hazards and indoor air quality. Lower rankings were given to stormwater in schools as having low-medium value. The speakers, meeting day and time, remote access, and the facility were highly rated by surveyors. Transportation and parking, understandably were ranked lower. Eighty-eight 88% of the surveyors stated they had an outstanding to very-good overall experience with the partnership. The remaining surveyors had a good experience.

When asked what they enjoyed about the partnership – answers included:

- Variety/Diversity of topics – identified issues of importance
- Relationship building/ Partnership opportunities were made
- Diversity of stakeholders in the audience
- Quality of the speakers
- Level of interest from audience
- Used success stories as a tool for learning

When asked what aspects of the partnership could be improved - answers included:

- Reduce meeting time to one hour
- Meet at different locations/ Change meeting time so others can attend
- More active problem solving/group discussions
- Site specific issues were not addressed
- No coffee for participants

Ideas for future topics include addressing-

- PCBs in schools – how to solve
- Elected officials – their perspective
- Site specific committees
- How to evaluate air quality in schools
- Charter schools – perspective
- Enforcement in schools – what laws apply?

- Sick building syndrome

## RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

Two recommendations for future next steps have been identified. The proposed recommendations would both expand the Partnership so that the benefits of the Partnership can be realized state-wide as well as keep a Southern California focus for site specific issues.

### ***1) Establish Statewide - California School Environmental Health Program -***

*Program Lead: Cal EPA*

EPA's Clean Green and Healthy Schools Initiative and State School Environmental Health Guidelines recognize the critical role that states play in promoting and ensuring that schools implement effective, comprehensive, and sustainable environmental health programs. For example, state agencies have participated in the development and implementation of policies and regulations for schools that encourage adoption of environmental health best practices and ensure healthier, productive environments for children and staff. Successful implementation of these best practices for healthy school environments can help reduce children and staff absenteeism, improve student performance, and prevent unnecessary costs associated with unhealthy school environments.

Leveraging off the established Partnership gives the State of California a head start in creating a state-wide program. A state-wide environmental health program for schools would be characterized by key state agencies (e.g., departments of health, education, energy, and environment) working together along with stakeholders to develop and implement comprehensive policies, best practices, and standards to help schools and school districts address environmental health issues in school facilities. Leadership from a state program can provide schools and school districts with the consistent guidance, resources, tools, and information they need to create healthy school environments for children and staff that promote high student achievement.

Effective state environmental health programs for schools incorporate the following basic elements – many of which have been addressed in the Partnership –

**Policies and Standards** – Several effective state environmental health programs for schools have been built on a foundation of state policies and standards that support, promote, or require schools and school districts to implement practices that promote environmental health. States are encouraged to identify and implement existing policies and standards that can help establish a robust school environmental health program, and to consider whether there are additional opportunities to protect children's health through the development of additional statewide policies or standards for healthy schools.

**Guidance and Technical Assistance** – Effective state environmental health programs for schools provide guidance, technical assistance, and tools to help schools and school districts take actions to protect environmental health in their school facilities. States should ensure that schools are aware of available resources in a way that is comprehensive, user-friendly, and accessible to all schools and school districts.



**Resources** – States should identify training opportunities, educational and promotional materials (e.g., fact sheets and brochures), financial assistance, incentives, and other resources that are available to promote healthy school environments for schools and school districts. States are encouraged to review existing resources to identify gaps that could have an impact on the success of the program. EPA's [Healthy School Environments](#) website provides a wealth of information and tools that can serve as resources for state environmental health programs for schools.

**Communication and Outreach** – States should establish methods for disseminating information to school districts to communicate and gather feedback concerning school environmental health initiatives. It is also important to reach out to potential partners such as colleges and universities, foundations, state associations and non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders that can provide technical assistance and resources to schools and school districts.

**Emergency Management** – An effective state emergency management program or plan focuses on the prevention of environmental health emergencies (e.g., chemical spills, mold and mildew damage, and accidental exposure to contaminants) that could place children and staff at risk. States should have emergency protocols, procedures, and points of contact in place that are accessible to schools, school districts, and the general public. In the event of an emergency, states should provide guidance and recommendations to schools and school districts throughout the emergency situation.

## ***2) Continue Southern California Partnership – narrow focus on site-specific issues***

Southern California remains a hotbed of issues due to the proximity of schools to sources of pollution from neighboring facilities and highways. Working with LAUSD, the LA Department of Public Health, DTSC, EPA and the community, continued efforts will be made to leverage agency resources to address issues in the Southern California area. Possible tasks include:

- Participation in the newly formed LA County “strike-team” of high risk facilities near schools
- Continued partnership with the LA EJ Network – focus on facilities of concern
- Trainings in the Southern California area - possible topics: PCB’s, Healthy Homes, Green Cleaning